



Financial Considerations. The best advice is to keep your money where it is (e.g., bank, credit union, stocks and securities). Beware of scams that prey on Y2K fears. Keep good paper records of accounts and bank statements, especially those for the last few months of 1999 and the first few months of 2000, so you can easily compare and resolve any administrative errors that might occur.

Credit and Debit

Cards. The credit card industry has worked with thoroughness to resolve Y2K problems. However, some billing and other errors may occur. Hold on to all credit-card receipts and compare them with charges that appear in your statement in the months just prior to and following January 1. Also check to ensure your payments are properly credited, and you are not assessed unwarranted late-payment fees.



Credit Ratings. If you haven't obtained a credit report within the past year, obtain a copy of your credit report in 1999, and if you spot a problem, request that it be corrected promptly. Then, in 2000, obtain another copy of your updated report and check again for errors. To request your credit report, call any of the nation's three major credit bureaus at these toll-free numbers: **Equifax** at 800-685-1111, **Experian** at 800-682-7654, and **Trans Union** at 800-888-4213. Expect to pay \$5 to \$10 for each report.

Home-Banking. Make sure your computer and banking software is Y2K compliant. Most computer and software manufacturers have web sites on their products' readiness. Keep a back-up disk of your records.

Cash-on-Hand. It is recommended to have about a week's worth of cash on hand. The Federal Reserve has ordered an additional \$50 billion in the event people make a run on banks and ATMs late in the year. However, you are cautioned against having too much cash on hand, so that you do not invite trouble.



Automobiles. Cars and trucks should be unaffected by Y2K; their microprocessors generally recognize time only in the passing of milliseconds, not in years. Ensure your service records are complete in case your repair shop loses data files.

Gasoline Availability—An industry survey indicates that gasoline and oil companies should be well prepared for Y2K. Year-end gasoline lines and shortages could result from large numbers of people filling up just before

the millennium. Many oil companies are increasing reserves to address this possibility. To avoid needing a large quantity of gasoline at the end of the year and to reduce the probability of long lines, get in the habit of refilling your fuel tank when the gauge reaches one-half. Storing of large quantities of gasoline is never a good habit.

Aviation. All FAA systems have been declared Y2K compliant. Up-to-date information may be obtained from the FAA web site (www.faa.gov).

Trains, Subways, and Buses. Computer glitches may disable some traffic-control systems, communications systems, and electrical systems. Buses are less susceptible to Y2K problems. Personal contingency plans and alternatives should be considered.



Computerized Reservations Systems. Most nationwide systems have been certified Y2K ready. However, you should

request written confirmation of bookings, including acknowledgement of advance payments, then reconfirm at least 24 hours in advance. Note that most trip-cancellation insurance does not cover Y2K due to its classification as a "known peril."



Foreign Travel and Residence. Investigate before committing to extended travel, particularly overseas. Check foreign travel and residence advisories posted at the State Department's site (<http://travel.state.gov>). Obtain passports and visas prior to Y2K. While the U.S. should be ready, foreign countries may not be as well prepared for Y2K.



Food Supply. The food industry has made remarkable Y2K progress. However, there may be temporary disruptions in the supply chain, or spoilage due to isolated power outages. Storing of a week's supply of nonperishable foods, bottled water, personal care and household consumable products is recommended. Be alert to "Use By" dates on short shelf-life food products.